(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to increase the trips to Virar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) 2 pair of Virar bound local trains (EMU) have been increased w.e.f. 1.10.96.

(b) Operational and resources constraints.

(c) Additional trips to Virar have not been found feasible. However, the number of 12-car services to/from Virar have been increased by 60 during 1996-97.

Connection of entire Calcutta by Rail

261. SHRI SUBRATA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that till now Calcutta is not connected with several places of the country by rail;

(b) if so, the steps to be taken to connect the places like Rajkot, Ghandhidham, Dwarka, Goa, Jaisalmer, Kanyakumari, Bikaner with Calcutta by direct rail services; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. Calcutta is well connected by rail.

(b) and (c). Howrah is already connected with Bikaner, Rajkot, Ghandhidham by direct trains/through coaches. Introduction of new trains from Howrah to Dwarka, Goa, Jaisalmer, Kannyakumari has not been found feasible due to operational and resource constraints.

Construction of Over Bridge at Railway Crossing

262. SHRI K.P. NAIDU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gate of railway crossing at Palam Colony, New Delhi generally remains closed due to the gauge conversion work undertaken recently as many trains now pass through the track;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to construct an over bridge for the smooth flow of road transport over the said railway crossing; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). Normally the level crossing is kept open to road traffic. Number of closures of level crossing has reduced as number of trains after gauge conversion has reduced.

A proposal of Delhi Development Authority to replace the level crossing by a Road over bridge is under planning as the Delhi Development Authority has not yet completed the requisite preliminaries.

Railway Network

263. SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the target growth of railway network in the country during the Eighth Five Year Plan period;

(b) whether it is a fact that the achievement was far below the target;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to increase the achievement rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The Achievements expected by the end of year 1996-97 under various plan heads, as compared to the targets fixed for the VIII five year plan, are as under :

	Plan Head	Target for VIII Plan	Achievement Expected
1.	Rolling Stock (Number)		
	(i) Locus	1499	1517
	(ii) Coaches	9100	9136
	(iii) EMUs	1265	1288
	(iv) Wagons	120000/99509*	97303+5000 wagons under OYWS in 1996-97
2.	Track Renewals (Kms)	12500	13972
3.	Gauge Conversion (Kms)	6000/8100*	7033
4.	Electrification (Kms)	3000/2700*	2700
5.	Doubling (Kms)	1250	1088
6.	New Lines (kms)	No Targets	714

(* Revised Targets)

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). Does not arise.

[Translation]

Amount Allocated to Maharashtra for Promotion of Tourism

264. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the schematic amount allocated during the